

**Testimony of
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Bureau of Land Management
Department of the Interior
Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests, & Public Lands
Committee on Natural Resources
U.S. House of Representatives
H.R. 689, Bureau of Land Management and Forest Service California
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Thank you for the opportunity to testify on H.R. 689, a bill to transfer the administrative jurisdiction of certain Federal lands in California between the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the U.S. Forest Service (FS). The BLM supports H.R. 689 because it will improve administrative efficiencies and thereby benefit the public. We would like to work with the sponsor and the Committee to resolve minor technical issues.

Background

The Chappie-Shasta Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Area consists of approximately 56,000 acres located within Shasta County, California. The area has a complex pattern of land ownership with approximately 25,000 acres administered by the BLM, 11,760 acres managed by the FS, and the rest in other Federal or private ownership. Each year, numerous special recreation events occur within this popular OHV area that require special recreation permits from both the BLM and the FS. In an effort to more consistently handle the recreational use, the BLM has taken the lead in managing the area and special events on both BLM and FS managed lands. Nonetheless, the mixed ownership and separate management and regulatory frameworks between the two agencies have, at times, caused frustrations for the public.

H.R. 689

H.R. 689 transfers to the BLM administrative jurisdiction of 11,760 acres of Federal land located within the Chappie-Shasta OHV Area that are currently managed by the FS. Consolidation of land ownership within the Chappie-Shasta OHV Area will allow for a more streamlined administration of recreation use and an improved recreation experience for the area's users.

In addition, the bill transfers to the FS administrative jurisdiction over three parcels totaling approximately 5,000 acres of public land currently managed by the BLM in Trinity, Shasta, Humboldt, and Siskiyou Counties. These lands are either adjacent to or within areas managed by the FS, and include the 4,830 acre-Tunnel Ridge portion of the Trinity Alps Wilderness (currently managed by the FS through a Memorandum of Understanding with the BLM) which is within the FS managed 517,000 acre Trinity Alps Wilderness. The other two parcels are a 217-acre parcel adjacent to Shasta Lake and a 44-acre parcel along California Highway 89. Both parcels are surrounded by FS lands and were identified for transfer to the FS in the 1993 BLM California Redding Resource Management Plan.

This interchange of administrative jurisdiction between the two agencies will lead to efficiencies in agency management, consistent management of Federal resources involved and better service to the public. H.R. 689 is the result of years of local efforts by the agencies, the public, and the sponsor. The BLM believes enactment of the bill would make land management adjustments where they are appropriate and beneficial to the public.

Finally, the bill as currently written uses both legal descriptions and references to a map to describe the lands. The BLM would like to work with the sponsor and the Committee to create maps to accompany the legislation, and recommend that the bill be amended accordingly. We believe that such maps will provide clarity.

Conclusion

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of H.R. 689. I would be happy to answer any questions.